



Transcripts of films – Country

BLM

<i>Bunjil the Eagle</i>	Jaara	Bendigo, central-western Victoria	Country, Culture & Community
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Brien Nelson: This Country is mine now ... my Country.

Aunty Lynne Warren: It's very inspirational and it's really great for the young kids learning about their history. Hearing the story about Bunjil they know exactly how this area was created. They need to know that to be able to connect with their Culture both past and in the future. If they don't learn the children will grow up and for the next generation there will be nothing, so we've got to keep it going as long as we can. Just keep passing it down generation to generation.

Brien Nelson: Early on in the Dreaming the land was one huge mountain, Waa the Crow and Bunjil the Eagle they were the two main people who fought over it and about it. Eagle kicked the little crow, whose feathers were white, and chased him away to a far away land. In this land crow learned the secret of making fire. He found a lightning strike in a tree which was still burning.

Text: Crow wanted to teach Eagle a lesson. He set fire to Eagle's nest on the mountain-top.

Brien Nelson: The great mountain started to break into parts. It was the start of the volcano (Mount Franklin) exploding. Those rocks set fire to two other hills (one at Bendigo and one at Castlemaine), turned those three hills into the volcanoes.

But old Eagle was too cunning and Crow got too tired. He decided to land on that hill and throw stones at Eagle. After that battle Eagle banished Crow from his Country and from that time on Eagle looked after the high Country. Jaara people call Eagle, Lord of the Forest and the Mountain. The battle between Eagle and Crow, that's how all this Country came to be and those three volcanoes.

Draw an event from the story.

<i>The Creation of Trowenna</i>	Neunone	Bruny Island, south-east coast Tasmania	Country, Culture & Community
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Leigh Maynard: It's more or less just a Tasmanian Aboriginal community these days. There's a lot of us from Cape Baron and that, who still identify with the people from Trowenna in the northeast of the state. Well, we more or less lost our tribal identity by being taken away and then not allowed to practise our Culture. I think from 1830 onwards it was just one massive assimilation policy, some were forced, others they promised land. Well, how you going to be Aboriginal if you're not going to be practising your Culture and being proud of doing those things?

Kartanya Maynard: We have such a rich Culture and heritage that you know you want to pass it down, and if you don't, we'll lose who we are as people, in Tasmania. It's just so important to me, and if you don't pass it on well it won't go any further. And what are we going to be then if we don't have that? And so I think it's extremely important to pass down these stories.

Ruth Langford: The Culture gives us an anchor that we come from ancient, ancient belonging, and so that we have this great cradle to sit in. And that Culture is like a breath that when we breathe Culture we're actually breathing our life.

Leigh Maynard: This is the story of the creation of Trowenna. Trowenna is the name of what we call today Tasmania. It starts with in the beginning when all things took their shape. The sea rose, Punywin the sun, flashed its fire over the land as it moved across the sky. And at night his wife, Venna the moon, would cast a silvery glow across the world, as she also moved across the sky.

Then one day when they rose from the sea, they passed across the sky and they started to drop seeds. Then the shellfish started came into the sea around the island. Now everything had been put in place. The seeds really sprouted, they started to diversity into all different types of plants. As the leaves would all drop from the trees and the plants, these would mingle with just sand, and the leaves and the sand would form to create earth. And, also when the shellfish died, they would form the mountains and the rocks. Then, as time went on, and the ages of Dreaming, a lot of icebergs started to form around the island of Trowenna. And these started rubbing up around the land and finally broke Trowenna away from the mainland.

Kartanya Maynard: To me being Aboriginal is to be a part of a long line of history. To be part of something greater than myself. To be part of one giant story that will never have an ending.

The Moon and the Gecko

Paakantji

Wilcannia, NSW

Country & Culture

(Murray Butcher singing, and talking about what’s happening to his people; and video clips of children dancing)

Murray Butcher: It’s important what stories we got left, to try and keep those stories and keep them alive.

Jonathon: Losing our Culture and traditional ways and that has affected all us younger people.

Murray Butcher: Today when you look up at the moon, if you look hard enough you can see the figure of a man holding an axe. That’s the story of how the moon came to be in the sky.

It was a special time, a time of Creation; the stars came into being, the hills, the creeks, the rivers, the people and the animals. This one particular story is about Patchuka and Bunu, the moon man and the gecko, and there was this young gum tree. ‘Uncle how about you climb up the tree and I’ll wait down here?’ Little Bunu he devised a plan to punish his uncle for being greedy to him.

Old uncle he climbs up into the tree. He was singing a song, a magic song, to make a big wind come up. He sang the song and he started blowing on the tree. This tree started growing. He tried to climb down but the faster he climbed down the faster the tree grew. The tree got so far up into the sky. ‘Can you touch it?’ He said ‘Yes, I can reach it.’

The little boy said ‘Well grab hold of it.’

So the uncle reached out and grabbed hold of the sky and when he grabbed hold of the sky the little boy he made the tree start growing back down. He (the uncle) got stuck up there, he couldn’t get down and he ended up getting turned into the moon.

Text: The wives were angry with Bunu for turning him into the moon. They set the dingoes on him, and ran into the sand hills and became bull ants. Bunu turned into the little grey gecko who lives behind the tree bark.

Murray Butcher: Well, Australia today according to the world is a very young Country where in fact Australia has always been a very ancient Country with ancient people. A people that had a history and still have a history of how this land came to be. Our history in Australia, it doesn’t just start with the coming in of the first fleet. Our history began a lot longer ago than that, and what people need to be aware, and not to be afraid, that we have one of the longest and oldest countries in the world. There are many different Aboriginal nations within Australia. Paakantji nation is just one of them.

(Murray Butcher talks about what’s happening to his people and Country.)

It would be good for the rest of Australia to come to terms with this, and to realise that there was a land with people before the first fleet. That there was a land with history, a living rich history, a history that is worth appreciating and worth looking after, because our people have looked after this Country for that long, without destroying it. In the last couple of hundreds of years many things have happened to make our Country unwell and we need to have a look, through Aboriginal people’s eyes, to get an appreciation for the Country so we can make our Country well again.

*Honeymoon
Springs*

Bronson

**Jarlmadangah,
WA**

**Country &
Culture**

Bronson: My name's Bronson and I live at Jarlmadangah in the Kimberley, in Western Australia. I'm going to show you a story about where we going, Honeymoon Springs. This story will show you the proper way when you go to the jila (waterhole). What you should do so the spirit, so they know who you are, so you can have no bad dreams. When we got there we pulled over and we had to go for walk. Our grandfather, showed us the way ...

John Darraga Watson: Get out of that water, come on girls ... we're all going to do it. (Collecting stones to put under their arms)

Bronson: That's by bobo he's calling me, what my bobo doing now is showing me what to do.

John Darraga Watson: Under your arm ...

Bronson: When you put that rock under your underarm the sweat goes on the rock and when you pull it out you can smell the rock and chuck it in the water.

John Darraga Watson: Everyone make a wish. John speaks in language to the spirits that live in the jila (waterhole).

Ready, ready, ready, ready ... (All throw their rocks into the water)

John Darraga Watson: You know somebody down there and somebody up there, listening to us, they'll see you. It's not from today; we do this all the time. Sometimes I go to the river. I just got a habit of chucking this (stone) in the water so the water knows who I am, maybe my brother, maybe my children - so you little ones, you got to know what this means. You can climb up you can walk around there, because people (spirits of this place) know you're here.

Bronson: After we chucked the rock in the water, my grandfather showed us another thing where he drinks the water spits it out (John sprays water), just like a spirit coming out of his mouth. Maybe he's talking to them.

John Darraga Watson: This place is called Galgabin; white people call it Honeymoon Springs. I don't know, someone might have come here for a honeymoon, I don't know, but it is Galgabin.

I hope you like the story from Bronson, here in Jarlmadnagah Community.

**Alex – My
Country****Alex****Beswick, NT****Country**

We're at Beswick waterfall. I can see a beautiful tree, long, tall. I can see a rock, beautiful waterfall, a waterhole, soft sand to play, and some crocodiles. There are rainbow snakes and two mermaids in the water, swimming around, only they come out at night. You can listen to them laugh and sing, the mermaids, sort of like a kookaburra. They sing like that.

When we was sitting down, when I was a little kid, my grandfather told me a story. You not allowed to swim at this waterfall because there's two mermaids hanging around. They might sink you down in the water, pull you in the water. We heard them singing and laughing, big mob echo. Yes, they up there, look, where the waterhole is. They're there now. It's special because it has soft sand, lake for swim and a beautiful waterfall.

I feel good, I feel proud of myself because this place is beautiful, with mountain and rock, because this is my land. I feel proud of myself because this is our land and it's very beautiful. It's got a lot of stories about them two mermaids and a rainbow snake. It belongs to us with all the old people, and the old women. I belong to this Country too. I got to look after things, take care of my family and friends, and the land, the waterhole. I feel like I'm strong and healthy and proud of my people. I feel love for my family, my father, my grandfather, my grandmother, grand nanna, when I'm in this Country. I feel love.

Draw the Creation people at the waterfall.

Vignettes – Country

BLM

Yingiya Guyula

**North East Arnhem
Land, NT**

**Country, Culture &
Community**



When I sing on that ground I feel my feet planted or rooted on the ground, the soil of where my spirit comes from. I can sing, I can be healed by my land through the songs I sing and dance. And the land can be healed through the songs and ceremonies because we are connected to one another. And all of a sudden that homesickness goes away, because I am connected to land (through) the songs I sing - we all light up, we have a power and strength that we sing about and we come to life. There is spirit on the land. There is spirit through my clapsticks that I play, through the didgeridoo, through the stamping of my people dancing. The land actually comes up alive and dances with us. We belong to one another. I belong to the land, the land belongs to me, we heal each other, the creator, that spirit comes to life.

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Terrence Coulthard**Iga Warta, North
Flinders Ranges, SA.****Country & Culture**



There are many parts to totems which are a part of our Culture, first of all Adnyamathanha, which is our nation. Adnya is rock and Mathanha is people, so people of the rocks, or Flinders Ranges. Our spirit can actually go back and be part of the rock or the earth because we feel that mother earth is alive, let's face it; it's full of life. The spirits of our people are embedded in everything around, in rocks, ranges. All these rocks have got the spirit of people in them, our nations' people, you can't rip them up, it's like taking a soul from the grave by doing that.

The mine is actually digging up a very sacred part of our Culture, that's where Yulu lit the fire. It certainly is difficult for us because what they're doing is they are digging up part of the creation story. It's part of Yulu's Dreaming, Yulu's *Muda*, and so certainly we don't like them mining the coal but you can't tell white man not to do anything, they just do it anyway. It is our land but with the way the government is we can't do anything. You know sites, when you mess with sites you're actually taking away a piece of religion, a piece of Culture, a piece of tradition and it's irreplaceable.

These stories are like the bible, if you burnt all the bibles in the world then these people would have nothing to build a framework of belief on and that's like us, we have to have these mountains, we have to have these hills, we have to have the Country. We use it all as a tool for teaching people about respect for mother earth, how to live in harmony with it, sharing, caring respecting each other.

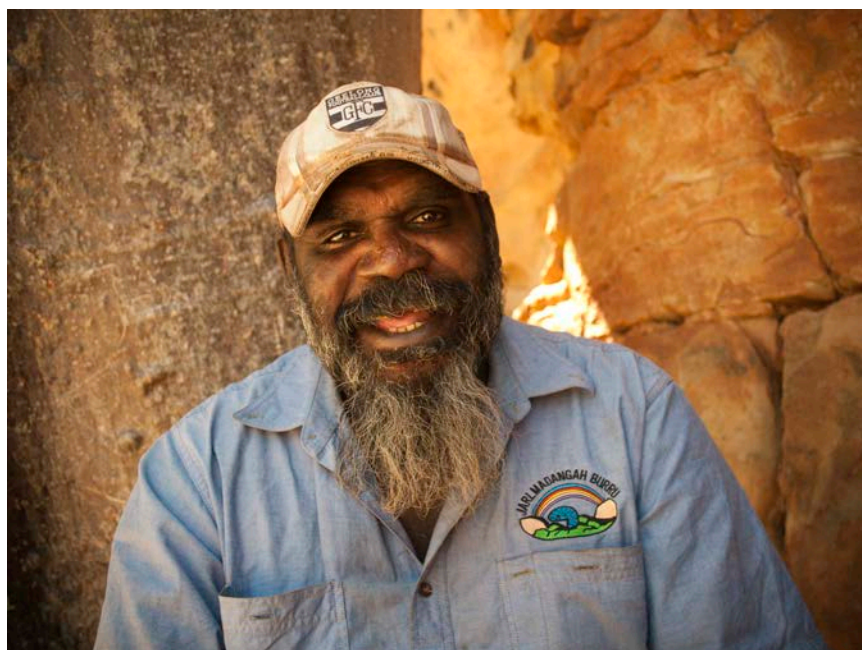
It's really important we take care of mother earth. She's our source of life basically, if we disrespect her and rape her like we are, by mining and taking resources in a not respectful way she will rebel and when she rebels all hell will break loose. She's sending out warning signals now, telling people to wake up, these natural disasters going on around the world is a wake up call.

Patrick Butcher**Lockhart River, Cape
York, Qld****Country, Culture &
Community**



Sacred places are like places that are prohibited or that are forbidden. If people go there, in our law that's trespassing into sacred places, and it's unacceptable in our tradition. It's just like someone is walking like without knowledge ... just walking into a sacred place ... and you know that's when you get really sick and crook and get cursed. There are Elders that hold that responsibility and are the true custodians of these sacred places. You can't go there by yourself but have to be there with an Elder of high status. It's a bit similar like, for me, because I've been in army reserve and defence forces. It's just like chain of command, but in our way, traditional way. So we have to respect this chain of command. If we want to go (to sacred places) we have to let them know then they take us. We can't go by yourself.

These are the things that are really vital to the connection to our Country: spiritually, physically, emotionally – this is very important. If we don't show respect to these places then very bad consequences happen. You get sick, and if you get crook the most advanced western medicine cannot actually heal you. The only way is, you have to come back to the people of the land. You have to come back to people of that Country.



William Watson, Jarlmadangah Community. WA

It's like we say Caring for Country, it's not only going back to Country but also looking after it respecting it. When you go back to Country, waterhole, jila (waterhole) you know there is a certain ceremony things that you have to do to recognise that Country so as you can be one.

When you are in Country even in other people's place, that special waterhole that rock hole, that jila, you have to recognise that important area. And there are certain rituals ceremonies about recognising the Country and the things that belong to that Country. You could have beings there that you have to make them happy and then that way that Country will look after you. That Country will embrace you, and say you're welcome here. So we're going back home once you're back there. Like I say, it embraces your, Country, like you going back to your family. Country is family so you look after it as you look after your family and he'll look after you. In our Culture some people are named after Country. Wherever you're from you're named after that Country, that certain waterhole, that certain sand hill, that tree that's growing there. So you are Country, and people recognise that person as he belongs to that area because that's where he comes from. He is named after that area, he been conceived in that area, something has given the mother and father that child from that area the spirit from there. So he belongs to that area so that his birthright.